

Volume 1 |
Issue 1
**October 5,
2018**

Excellence with Equity

*The true measure of our
success will be the
number of people
touched and transformed
by our success.*

~Angela Arrendts

Vision Statement: Shakopee Public Schools is committed to raising the achievement of all students while narrowing the gaps between the lowest and highest performing students and eliminating the racial or cultural predictability and disproportionality of which student groups occupy the highest and lowest achievement categories including rates of graduation. By committing to this, we are ensuring educational equity for all students.

Who are the members of the Equity and Cultural Liaison Team?

Dave Orlowsky, Maya Diaz-Slipka, Lina Marin, Cristina Oxta, Evelin Hernandez-Morales, Kristi Ward, Susan Solander, Ray Betton, Yael Ripoll, Lupita Reyes-Morales, Dee Buros, Ibrahim Mohamed, Bethany Pearson, Juan Mitchell, Sean McMoore, Svetlana Mshar



A dedicated team committed to helping support the positive connections for students and families to their schools and the Shakopee Public schools.

*See All, Serve All,
Support All!

We are far
stronger together
than we are a
part.*

Greetings Shakopee Staff,

What a great start to the school year! As we have walked through the halls of schools and talked with students, families and staff, it has been a successful start of the school year. We want to thank you for your patience the Equity Team as we have been working through the visioning process of equity work here in Shakopee. With a “small but mighty team”, we want to continue the work that we have been doing, while also increasing the capacity to serve more schools, staff, students and families.

Currently, our Excellence in Equity team is broken into two teams. The first team is the Equity Team; which consists of the Equity Programming Principal, Equity Supervisor, three Equity Specialist, Indian Education Coordinator and AVID Coordinator. The second team is the Cultural Liaison Team; which consists of seven Cultural Liaison team members. Each team meets with the Equity Programming Principal and Equity Supervisor weekly. Twice per month, we all come together to meet and discuss various topics. When everyone is in the room, the teaming, excitement and conversations are rich and focus around the equity needs of our students, families, community and staff.

In August, I created a survey for District Leadership as well as the Equity Team. In response, we have heard your voice and understand that you would like to have more involvement of the Equity team in your schools. The Equity team is currently working on creating a tool for Principals and other leaders to use to help support the vision within each school. We also understand that equity work is embedded in all we do, therefore, we recognize the need to continue to provide professional development opportunities and partnerships with each school based upon the needs of that school.

During the month of October, the Equity Programming Principal and Equity Supervisor will be meeting with school Principals and leaders to engage in informal conversations about what each individual building needs to ensure that equity is at the fore-front for all we do. We firmly believe that equity work is a personal journey, with the understanding that each journey intersects into a partnership between multiple staff members within the district.

While the meetings and details of specific school site needs are developed, the Equity team has been working on various projects with Dave Orlovsky. Dave is excited to partner in this work and figure out continued opportunities for equity to align with the direction Shakopee is moving towards. As an equity team, we are grateful that in Gary’s passing, Dave was willing to jump in and join our journey to support this work. The projects will be shared at the District Leadership meeting mid-October.

Additionally, this school year, we have identified how we are currently providing support district wide with our “small but mighty team”, while still maintaining consistency with the work that has been happening in the High School. Below we have provided some information as to how the Equity team serves schools at this time. We have also provided other information and how it relates to the Equity Team. All of this has been part of the visioning process for 2018-2019 school year. Once we have information regarding building specific needs, we will be reviewing our plan and adjusting as need be to provide district wide support.

We are excited to once again partner and join the work with all of you to ensure that all students have opportunities to be successful. If you have questions, comments or feedback, please do not hesitate to reach out. We are here to serve. Thank you for all you do! Have a great month of October!

Sincerely,

Kristi Ward

Shakopee Public School:
www.shakopee.k12.mn.us

TLC

Restorative Circles

Juan Mitchell, Bethany Pearson, Yael Ripoll and Ibrahim Mohamed will be joining TLC on their weekly restorative circles. Additionally, they will be providing support to the staff, students and families at TLC. The restorative circles training was an initiative that Eric Serbus brought to TLC staff in August. We are excited to have Equity team involved in this important work around restorative justice.

High School

Academy Business Team Meetings

Ray Betton, Juan Mitchell, Sean McMoore and Bethany Pearson will each be assigned to two different Academies. As schools from across the country come to see and learn from Shakopee about the Academy Model, it is going to be so great to say that we value equity as work that is embedded, that we have an equity specialist assigned to each academy.

I-Teams for each Academy

Ray Betton, Juan Mitchell, Sean McMoore and Bethany Pearson will each be assigned to two Academies to support the I-Team structure. This is an opportunity to hear about the student needs of each academy and provide equity support. Additionally, this model will build capacity as other staff on those teams can learn and model similar strategies for working with students, families and staff.

Middle School

East Middle School

Juan Mitchell will be the Equity Specialist assigned to work directly with East MS

West Middle School

Bethany Pearson will be the Equity Specialist assigned to work directly with West MS

Elementary Schools

Jackson

Sean McMoore will be the Equity Specialist assigned to work directly with Jackson Elementary

Sweeney

Sean McMoore will be the Equity Specialist assigned to work directly with Sweeney Elementary

Sun Path

Bethany Pearson will be the Equity Specialist assigned to work directly with Sun Path Elementary

Eagle Creek

Ray Betton will be the Equity Supervisor assigned to work directly with Eagle Creek Elementary

Red Oak

Juan Mitchell will be the Equity Specialist assigned to work directly with Red Oak Elementary

Central Family Center

Stepping Stones, PACE, ECFE

Ray Betton will be the Equity Supervisor assigned to work directly with CFC

Check and Connect (High School)

Check and Connect

Ray Betton will be the Coordinator leading the work of Check and Connect in the High School. Juan Mitchell will be a mentor as part of the Check and Connect program. For the 2018-2019 school year, Check and Connect will begin in the Freshman Academy with a goal to increase capacity each academic year. Check and Connect is a comprehensive intervention designed to enhance student engagement at school and learning with marginalized, disengaged students for our Freshman Academy Students.

Through relationship building, problem solving and capacity building, and persistence. The goal of Check and Connect is to foster school completion with academic and social competence. There are four components:

1. A Mentor who works with the student and family for a minimum of 2 years.
2. Regular checks, utilizing data regarding behavior, and attendance.
3. Timely interventions driven by data.
4. Engagement with families.

AVID (MS and High School)

AVID

AVID is a program that is funded through the Achievement & Integration funds. This is a program that begins in 8th grade and grows to the High School. Bethany Pearson will be working directly with the AVID Coordinator, Cristina Oxta as well as program staff to partner in the work.

Young Scholars (Elementary)

Young Scholars

Young Scholars is a program that is funded through the Achievement & Integration funds. This is a program that directly serves elementary children Kindergarten – 3rd grade. The program is currently evaluating how they can continue to support the 4th and 5th graders as they age out of the program. Sean McMoore will be working directly with the Young Scholar Coordinator Erin Heilman, as well as program staff to partner in the work.

Indian Education (District Wide)

Indian Education

Indian Education is a program funded through the MN Department of Education. This is a program that directly serves American Indian students in MS, High School and TLC. Services are provided for Elementary on an “as-needed” partnership. Dee Buros is the Indian Education Coordinator who is an active member of our Equity Team. Every Equity team member works with the Indian Education program.

Cultural Liaisons (District Wide)

Hispanic/Spanish Liaisons

1. Eagle Creek and Red Oak – Lupita Reyes-Morales
2. Sun Path and Sweeney – Maya Diaz-Slipka
3. Jackson and Central Family Center – Evelin Hernandez-Morales
4. East and West MS – Lina Marin
5. High School and TLC – Yael Ripoll

Somalia Liaison

1. District Wide – Ibrahim Mohamed

Russian Liaison

1. District Wide – Svetlana Mshar

Highlights from our Cultural Liaison Team

Top things to know when using an interpreter (full document linked below):

1. Eye Contact – Always look at the parents (not the interpreter)
2. Active Listening in an Empathetic Stance – Smile, nod, affirm with body language how the parent is feeling.
3. Pause after each complete thought (best practice would be to work this out before the parent comes with interpreter as to how long or when to pause)
4. Remember interpreter is required to interpret everything said in the room – curse words, side conversations, and irrelevant or repetitive comments included.
5. Avoid or explain educational acronyms that will be used in the meeting.
6. Use standard English versus American slang.
7. Be concise with information and aware that interpretation takes more time.

Click Below for Additional Resources when working with Families and Cultural Liaisons:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/18NtWcoowPaevFQCGHNJ6HmcRquqH_gC-/view?usp=sharing

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1FHawBdbjoHCJsfpqA7H_O7pnSEGWofRD

SEED – Shakopee Educators for Equity and Diversity

Who and What are the SEED team?

Who:

- A fabulous group of Shakopee Public School Educators from around the district who come together once a month to discuss various topics around Equity and Diversity.

The Mission of SEED:

- To provide Shakopee Public School teachers with consistent learning opportunities and tools that will help them develop their cultural competence, equity and advocacy skills.
- Advance racially equitable strategies and outcomes that have concrete benefits for students of color; with strong potential to be a model that is instructive to other affiliates in Minnesota.

If you are interested, in joining or finding out who we are, please join us on our next open meeting:

Date: Tuesday, October 23, 2018

Place: High School - Shakopee Saber Community Room

Time: 4:15pm – 5:45pm

Please click on the link below to let us know you are coming (planning purposes).

<https://goo.gl/forms/VDKXaiLYu45DX9kI2>

Equity and Cultural Liaison Contact Information

All Members are Here to Serve:

The District Equity team consists of members from the Equity Team, Cultural Liaison Team as well as other teams and or committees district wide. If you would like to get ahold of any of the equity team members, below are the contact numbers for each person. We are here to support student success; family engagement and staff needs. If you would like to follow our work, please go to our Twitter pages:

Name	Office Phone #	Email
Kristi Ward	5092	kward@shakopee.k12.mn.us Twitter @PrincipalKWard
Ray Betton	5148	rbetton@shakopee.k12.mn.us
Sean McMoore	8724	smcmoore@shakopee.k12.mn.us
Juan Mitchell	5149	jmitchel@shakopee.k12.mn.us
Bethany Pearson	5176	bpearson@shakopee.k12.mn.us
Dee Buros	5790	dburos@shakopee.k12.mn.us
Cristina Oxta	5763	coxtra@shakopee.k12.mn.us
Ibrahim Mohamed	5041	imohamed@shakopee.k12.mn.us
Svetlana Mshar	5094	smshar@shakopee.k12.mn.us
Yael Ripoll	5813	yripoll@shakopee.k12.mn.us
Lina Marin	5139	lmarin@shakopee.k12.mn.us
Lupita Reyes -Morales	5730	greyesmorales@shakopee.k12.mn.us
Maya Diaz-Slipka	5846	mdiaz@shakopee.k12.mn.us
Evelin Hernandez-Morales	5814	ehernand@shakopee.k12.mn.us

Professional Articles: Connecting the work to Professional Literature

The Equity Diet: Building Capacity Through Daily Habits

http://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/everyday_equity/2018/07/the_equity_diet_building_capac.html?cmp=soc-edit-tw

Pursuing Social and Emotional Development Through a Racial Equity Lens: A Call to Action (if this link does not work, google the article title – it is a great read)

https://assets.aspeninstitute.org/content/uploads/2018/05/Aspen-Institute_Framing-Doc_Call-to-Action.pdf

Trauma Informed Teacher

<http://www.ransomforisrael.com/the-trauma-informed-teacher-silent-front-line/>